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STATE FOR AF/W, AF/RSA, DRL/AE AND INR/AA
PARIS FOR POL - D'ELIA

E.O. 12958: N/A
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SUBJECT: SENEGAL: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION SITREP 5: PROVISIONAL
RESULTS

REF: DAKAR 0450 AND PREVIOUS

SUMMARY

1. (SBU) With the announcement of provisional election results, Senegal's voters gave incumbent President Abdoulaye Wade a comfortable victory. He won in 32 two of Senegal's 34 departments, gaining a national majority of 55.72 per cent with a vote tally of 1,873,907. With 70 percent turnout, the results underscore the strength of Senegal's long democratic tradition -- plus the power of incumbency, patronage and money. END SUMMARY.

LANDSLIDE VICTORY

2. (U) Provisional results published by departmental committees show that President Wade won all but two of Senegal's 34 departments. The Department of Thies was taken by former Prime Minister Idrissa Seck and that of Nioro was won by former Prime Minister Moustapha Niasse.

FIGURES SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES

3. (U) Out of a total of 3,414,771 votes cast, Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS) leader Wade won 1,873,907 (55.79 per cent); Idriss Seck received 503,493 (14.99 per cent); Socialist Party leader Ousmane Tanor Dieng was third with 459,513 votes (13.68 per cent); and Moustapha Niasse came in fourth with 198,523 votes (5.91 per cent). Four middleweight candidates received a combined percentage of 7.25 percent of the vote with Socialist Mayor of Ziguinchor Robert Sagna taking 2.61 percent, followed by Abdoulaye Bathily with 2.2 percent, Landing Savane with 1.9 percent, and Talla Sylla with 0.54 percent.

4. (SBU) Even in the troubled Casamance region the electorate voted to re-elect Wade despite his facing off against the charismatic Sagna. In a surprise result, Sagna only received 25 per cent of the vote in his hometown, while Wade won 58.7 per cent. Turnout in the Casamance was affected by rebel attacks on February 24 that left one soldier dead and 13 wounded and some polling places without election materials.

FINAL RESULTS COULD TAKE ANOTHER WEEK

5. (U) The departmental results will now be scrutinized by the National Vote Count Commission, which has until March 2 to provide final results to the Constitutional Court. If one or more candidates contest the results, the Court has until March 10 to review them and render a definitive result.

COMMENT

6. (SBU) Although the Socialists and Bathily are claiming massive fraud to provide some explanation for their resounding defeat, the U.S., other international and national observers view the election

as free and fair albeit disorganized. Organizational problems favored no particular candidate, and the 70 percent turnout was impressive both for its size and for the patience that it required. If anything, the results again underscore the strength of Senegal's long democratic tradition -- plus the power of incumbency, patronage and money. END COMMENT.

17. (U) Visit Embassy Dakar's classified website at <http://www.state.sgov/gov/p/af/dakar/>.

JACOBS